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E.O. 11652: GDS

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. LEBANON

A. ARAB LEADERS PREPARE FOR CONFERENCE

AS FIGHTING IN EAST BEIRUT OCTOBER 15 RENEWED THE POSSIBILITY OF MAJOR CIVIL STRIFE, REPORTS CIRCULATED IN ARAB CAPITALS THAT ISRAEL, LEBANESE CHRISTIANS, AND THE PLO WOULD NOT TOLERATE A PAN-ARAB INTERVENTION IN LEBANON.

--EMBASSY JIDDA: PRINCE SAUD TOLD AMBASSADOR AKINS THE ONLY ALTERNATIVES LEFT, BARRING UN MEDIATION, ARE SYRIAN OR INTER-ARAB INTERVENTION. ISRAEL, GIVEN ITS SUPERIOR MILITARY CAPABILITY, CANNOT POSSIBLY BE THREATENED BY EVENTS IN LEBANON, AND NO ARAB WOULD EVER BELIEVE THE US COULD NOT STOP THE ISRAELIS FROM INVADING LEBANON.

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--EMBASSY BEIRUT: WE DOUBT THE GOVERNMENT OR THE CHRISTIANS WOULD ACCEPT ANY ARAB FORCE IN LEBANON, EXCEPT PERHAPS AN "OBSERVER CUM MEDIATORY GROUP." MEDIATION BY THE ARAB LEAGUE MIGHT BE ACCEPTABLE, THOUGH AGAIN NEITHER CHRISTIAN NOR PALESTINIAN-BACKED FORCES WOULD WISH TO CONCEDE THE ARBITRATOR ROLE.

--EMBASSY CAIRO: IF IT IS INDEED TRUE THE ISRAELIS WILL NOT STAND FOR DISPATCH OF INTER-ARAB FORCES, WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW, BEFORE TALKING TO FAHMY, WHAT KIND OF FORCE MIGHT BE "TOLERABLE," AND WOULD ADD THAT IT WOULD BE WISER TO ATTEMPT TO CURB ANY ARAB LEAGUE ACTION BEFORE THE MEETING OCTOBER 16.

--EMBASSY DAMASCUS: SYRIAN AND PLO NON-ATTENDANCE AT THE CAIRO CONFERENCE WAS PROBABLY COORDINATED IN ADVANCE, BUT THEIR REASONS FOR PASSING UP THE MEETINGS ARE DIFFERENT: SYRIA SEES THE CONFERENCE AS AN ASSERTION ITS MEDIATION EFFORTS PROVED INADEQUATE, WHEREAS THE PLO DOES NOT WISH TO SEE ARAB STATES DEBATE THE PRESENCE AND STATUS OF PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON.

B. VATICAN AID FOR LEBANON?

AMBASSADOR GODLEY LEARNED YESTERDAY FROM THE VATICAN REPRESENTATIVE TO PALESTINE THAT BOTH ROME AND CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES IN NEW YORK HAD CONTACTED HIM ABOUT MASSIVE RELIEF TO LEBANON. THE REPRESENTATIVE ALSO BELIEVED BOTH NEW YORK AND THE PAPAL NUNCIO THOUGHT ALL THEY NEEDED FOR PL 480 ASSISTANCE WERE GOVERNMENT REQUESTS AND AGREEMENTS. ALTHOUGH THE REPRESENTATIVE AGREED LOCAL CATHOLIC GROUPS COULD HANDLE SMALL AMOUNTS OF RELIEF, THE WHOLE SITUATION PRESENTS A VERY DIFFICULT PROBLEM:

--THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT HAS NOT YET COLLECTED FOR RELIEF AND THE RED CROSS HAS BEEN NOTEWORTHY FOR ITS SILENCE.

--THERE ARE MANY "LITTLE PEOPLE" IN LEBANON WHO ARE CURRENTLY HUNGRY, AND THIS "MASSIVE" AID, APPARENTLY SECRET

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SECTARIAN, WOULD NOT BE CHANNELED TO THESE NEEDY PEOPLE.

AMBASSADOR'S COMMENT: ALTHOUGH WE SHOULD NOT LET THE LEBANESE STARVE, I PROPOSE TO TELL THE PAPAL NUNCIO HERE THAT THE USG WILL BE ASSOCIATED ONLY WITH TOTALLY NON-SECTARIAN AID. THE USG WOULD LIKE TO SEE SOME GOL ACTION BEFORE GETTING INVOLVED, GIVEN THE DIFFICULTY OF CUTTING THE LOAF TO

SATISFY ALL WARRING FACTIONS. (SECRET) JIDDA 6949 (EXDIS);
(CONFIDENTIAL) BEIRUT 12820; (SECRET) BEIRUT 12790 (EXDIS);
(SECRET) CAIRO 10254 (EXDIS) AND (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)
DAMASCUS 3991, 10/15; (SECRET) BEIRUT 12789 (EXDIS), 10/15.)

2. PREPCON DRAWS TO A CLOSE

ACCORDING TO REUTER, PRELIMINARY TALKS LEADING TO THE DECEMBER 16 MEETING OF OIL PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS ENDED LAST NIGHT FOLLOWING AGREEMENT THAT ANY PARTICIPANT IN THE FOUR-LEVEL COMMISSION COULD RAISE ANY SUBJECT RELEVANT TO THE DIALOGUE. EMBASSY LONDON REPORTS THAT CALLAGHAN WILL HOLD OUT FOR A SEPARATE BRITISH SEAT AT THE CONFERENCE AND WOULD APPRECIATE USG SUPPORT. (SECRET) LONDON 15824 (EXDIS), 10/15.)

3. GREECE WORRIED ABOUT ITS FINANCES

FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS CALLED IN CHARGE STERNS TO URGE THAT THE US CONSIDER QUADRUPLING ITS PROPOSED SUPPORT AID TO \$130 MILLION. WHILE SATISFIED WITH THE US PROPOSAL FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE, BITSIOS STRESSED:

--IT WAS CLEAR FROM RECENT TRIPS THAT EUROPE WOULD OFFER GREECE RELATIVELY LITTLE FINANCIAL AID.

--WITH COMMERCIAL LOANS ALSO UNAVAILABLE, ONLY THE US COULD HELP RELIEVE GREECE'S STRAINED BALANCE OF PAYMENTS.

MEANWHILE, EMBASSY LONDON REPORTS THE BRITISH BELIEVE CARAMANLIS WAS "THRILLED TO BITS" WITH HIS OCTOBER 9-11 VISIT TO LONDON. THE ASSURANCES CALLAGHAN PASSED ON FROM SECRETARY

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KISSINGER WERE PARTICULARLY HELPFUL SINCE CARAMANLIS WAS UPSET OVER WHAT HE REGARDED AS "CRUDE US PRESSURE TACTICS" TO FORCE GREECE INTO FULL RESUMPTION OF NATO MEMBERSHIP. (SECRET) ATHENS 7927 (EXDIS), AND (CONFIDENTIAL) LONDON 15811 (EXDIS), 10/15.) KISSINGER

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